



**Connecticut  
Light & Power**

The Northeast Utilities System



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**TESTIMONY OF RICHARD A. SODERMAN  
THE CONNECTICUT LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY  
and YANKEE GAS SERVICES COMPANY  
Energy & Technology Committee--March 3, 2009**

**H.B. No. 6607 AAC ELECTRIC SUBSTATIONS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS.**

The proposed bill would require that the Siting Council may not approve a certificate for a substation in a residential area unless it is approved by three-quarters of its membership. As a matter of math, this means that votes today require 5 of 9 in favor, this proposal would require 7 of 9 in favor. As a practical matter, this could create situations in which, if members are absent or must recuse themselves from voting, a sound project might not be approved, thereby threatening the reliability of electric service. The main determinants of siting a substation are electric reliability and capacity to serve customer needs. In many cases, residential areas are necessary sites because of the proximity to transmission facilities. In some communities, the density of residences makes it almost impossible to find locations that would be acceptable.

The Siting Council already considers the justification for selection of the proposed site, including a comparison of the proposed site with alternative sites which are environmentally, technically, and economically practical. The Siting Council also considers means to mitigate the presence of a substation in a residential area. It often requires screening and other techniques to minimize the impact in the community. In addition, the statutes already require that a proposed substation location be presented to the planning and zoning commission of the municipality in which it is proposed to be built or expanded, and if the commission disapproves of the location, a two thirds vote of the Siting Council is required to override the local commission.

This bill will make it more difficult and costly to site and construct substations, resulting in higher costs and lower reliability for customers. We oppose this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.